



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Stephen P. Sinnott, Acting United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Ritchie Bufford, Madison, DOB: 03/12/81, pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court in Madison to unlawfully possessing a Taurus 9mm handgun and 9mm ammunition, as a convicted felon. Bufford was convicted in 1999 of felony manufacture/deliver cocaine. Under federal law, in addition to a firearms prohibition, convicted felons are prohibited from possessing ammunition.

On February 7, 2005, a Town of Madison Police Officer attempted a traffic stop of a car driven by Bufford. Bufford led the police on a high speed chase, which included portions of the Beltline. During the chase, the car suddenly veered into the right lane near the Todd Drive exit. Police eventually caught up with Bufford when his car crashed into a basketball pole in a residential neighborhood. Bufford fled the scene, but was located with the assistance of a police dog. On the driver's seat of the vehicle, officers found a partially loaded Taurus handgun magazine. Officers returned to the Beltline near Todd Drive and recovered a loaded Taurus 9mm handgun and a cell phone that they linked to Bufford.

U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb scheduled sentencing for July 19, 2005, at

1:00 pm. Bufford faces a maximum possible penalty of ten years in prison, followed by a three-year term of supervised release.

The charge against Bufford was the result of an investigation conducted by the Town of Madison Police Department. Prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rita M. Rumbelow.

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